

# Finding Employment After 50

Be prepared to convince employers you aren't too old to learn and you can work as hard as younger people.

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**F**inding employment after the age of 50 can be challenging. Prejudice against older workers can still be a factor in the market and workers over 50 should be prepared to convince prospective employers that they aren't too old to learn new things and they have the energy to work as hard as people in their 20s.

Companies are looking for workers who can easily adapt to change, have current skills, learn new things and are technology savvy.

Here are some tips to help you get that job:

- If you've been laid off, look for a new job immediately. The longer you're unemployed, the more it works against you.
- Look for companies that like to recruit older workers. Do Internet searches with words like, "older workers" "workers over 50" etc. to find these.
- Networking may be your best tool. Tell all your friends, ex-colleagues, and others that you are looking for work. Use the LinkedIn web



# Use the resources that are available to you.

There are many resources throughout this publication.

site; professional associations, volunteering or consulting to network. Networking is especially important if you are seeking a high-level position.

- Target the maximum number of potential employers. The sad fact is that there is discrimination against older workers. Compensate for that by applying at more places than you might have in the past.
- If you think you have the skills, consider starting your own business – and hire older workers!
- Research the company before you interview. Use that information to show how your skills, experience, knowledge and abilities can enhance their bottom line.
- You might try working for a temp agency. In addition to the income, you may be able to turn a temporary job into a permanent one.
- Consider working shifts that younger people with children might not work.
- A traditional, chronological resume may work against you. Typically screeners are in their 20s or 30s. They may scan your resume and say to themselves, “Wow, this guy graduated from college before I was born!” It may work better for you to remove the dates of graduations and all jobs except your last from your resume. Emphasize only the last ten years of employment. Do not use an old resume; tailor a new one to your new circumstances. See the article on resumes in this publication for more tips.

- Keep your skills current. Focus on computer skills including the Internet and word-processing, spreadsheet, database and presentation applications. Take courses, seminars or workshops to keep up with the latest developments in your profession, and the current technology. Tell prospective employers that you are willing and able to learn.
- Emphasize the assets of an older worker, and your ability to learn. Use words like “adaptable,” “flexible,” and “dependable.” Focus on your experience, stability, frugality and strong work ethic. See the article in this publication on interviews for more tips.
- NEVER talk down to a youthful interviewer. Never talk about the old days or “the way we did it.” It’s also a good idea to update your wardrobe and hair style.
- Keep a positive attitude. Never say anything negative about previous bosses or companies you’ve worked for. Have a “can do” attitude.
- Reassure the interviewer that you want to do the job you are applying for, and that you intend to stay for a long time.
- When it comes to money, be prepared to settle for less than you were making before (if you’ve been laid off). Avoid the topic of specific wages during the interview and negotiate for salary after you’ve been offered the job. If you’ve made more in prior jobs than the current employer is willing to pay, it may result in being weeded out, so keep that under your hat. Find out what people in your prospective occupation are making at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoOccwage.do>. ✂